

The statement:

“Economically, culturally, and politically, Latinos are a vital part of our nation. As the fastest growing ethnic group in our country, the Hispanic community makes America a better and stronger nation. Almost 48 million Hispanic Americans exercise more than \$600 billion in purchasing power.

“In our own communities in Northern Ohio, the Hispanic community has made tremendous strides in all walks of life. Truly, Hispanic cultural contributions have enriched the marvelous tapestry of American social life.

“Despite the growth and progress of our Hispanic community, many families have not fared well economically over the last several years. During the eight years of the Bush Administration, Hispanic median household income in America fell by \$3,557, 2.8 million more Hispanics joined the ranks of the uninsured, and 3.2 million more Hispanics fell below the poverty level.

“I am proud to celebrate the contributions and heritage of our country's Hispanic community. All Latinos, like all Americans, deserve a meaningful opportunity to achieve the American Dream.

“We are a stronger, more vibrant nation as a result of the contributions of Hispanic citizens.

“Adelante!”